Synopsis

"An analytical study of out patient satisfaction with special reference to healthcare service providers in Public and Private Hospitals: A study of Hospitals in Selected districts of Uttarakhand."

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Submitted by

(Praveen Kumar)

Under the guidance of

Dr. Sandeep Kumar
Professor
School of Commerce & Management
IIMT University, Meerut

IIMT University, Meerut

(Department of Management, School of Commerce & Management)
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Chapter-1

Introduction

It is a known fact that managing a Hospital to serve its purpose requires specialized knowledge and skills. A Hospital administrator is a manager of resources. These resources in a country like India are scarce. The success of a Hospital depends upon how well it utilizes these available resources to get optimum results.

It is of utmost importance, for the Hospital authorities to understand the processes involved which contribute to a favourable overall experience for the patients. The overall experience for the patients involve a number of factors such as doctor‟s competence, his interaction with the patients, behaviour of the paramedical staff, various facilities offered by the hospital, behaviour of support staff and overall hygiene and ambience of the hospital. I

It is observed that because of cut throat competition and mushrooming of service organizations there is an urgent need to look beyond customer satisfaction, i.e. towards customer retention and loyalty. As such organizations are striving hard to redesign and reinvent their operational methodologies by building strong and effective organization cultures so as to have a focus on the consumer loyalty and relationship management like all other service sectors.

Today there is tremendous pressure of competition and society is quickly transforming itself into a consumer - centred market. Consumers are making choices that promote their effective value and companies work hard to establish marketing strategies that promote such effective value perceived by consumers in order to enhance customer satisfaction and corporate performance. The same is applicable in the Health care industry also.

1. Global Vs Indian Health Care Industry:

a) The global healthcare services market

Various reports indicate that one of the primary development goals of many countries is the establishment of a comprehensive, modern healthcare system for all citizens. Health services will be one of the global growth markets of the 21st century. Providing health services internationally usually requires a long-term presence in the foreign market than that needed for the sale of medical devices.

b) Healthcare in India

today provides existing and new players with a unique opportunity to achieve innovation, differentiation and profits. India's primary competitive advantage over its peers lies in its large pool of welltrained medical professionals. Also, India's cost advantage compared to peers in Asia and Western countries is significant, cost of surgery in India is one-tenth of that in the US or Western Europe. In India, the diagnostics sector has been witnessing immense progress in innovative competencies and credibility. Technological advancements and higher efficiency systems are taking the market to new heights.

2. Patient Satisfaction And Loyalty

It is seen that there are correlations amongst medical services quality, patient satisfaction, value of care and re-visit intention. Patient satisfaction is affected by the characteristics of the service provider and medical services and patients demonstrate distinct behaviour toward each of those characteristics. The evaluation of a patient on value of care has an influence on

the future re-visit intention and other behavioural intentions. Customer satisfaction is not a sufficient condition for re-visit intention, but a necessary condition indeed

It is observed that Patient satisfaction is routinely measured at the Hospitals through patient feedback forms. The data for each Hospital is periodically analyzed to compare its historic patient satisfaction trends as well as compare the patient satisfaction levels against a benchmark across all Hospitals. It is seen that Customer's expectations are rationalized, based on the current healthcare standards in India. Given the superior quality standards that Hospitals have set, feedback results have typically shown higher levels of satisfaction as compared to the market. In order to ensure that there is no compromise

Outpatient Services

The out-patient department is usually located at the Ground Floor of the Clinical Division. It is a unit in the hospital where walk-in patients are attended to and treated. Its primary objective is to render health service at minimal cost. It serves as a training ground for residence, interns, clerks, and other paramedical trainees. It likewise provides health education, moral and spiritual guidance to patients and their relatives. Lastly, it offers opportunities for research. The outpatient services provide the main linkage of the hospital with the public. This department interacts and communicates with the neighbourhood. Today the outpatients are very important for any Hospital. The scope of services in OPD is as follows.

1. Preventive services like immunization and well - baby clinics.
2. Curative Services like Investigations and procedures.
3. Follow up of chronic illnesses and follow-ups.
4. Rehabilitative services like Physiotherapy.

5. The OPD department is the showroom of the Hospital. This department is the entry point for future prospective patients. The focus of this study is on the Out Patient Department, of Public and Private Hospitals.

Studies indicate that the organizations which endeavour to measure relationship and patient loyalty, have a lot of advantages such as sustaining competitive pressure, increasing loyalties, reducing the need to compete solely on price basis and increasing new patient base by referrals. This study will help the providers in developing stronger and more comfortable relationships with the consumers i.e. the patients and instil more confidence in them so that they avoid seeking out and evaluating other providers

Thus it is seen that that healthcare should make genuine efforts to have a better understanding of how to develop and nurture long-term patient-provider relationships. The patients in general develop loyalty towards hospitals and these are based on significant interpersonal experiences they have with the doctors and nurses and the quality of services of the hospital.

The Healthcare industry in India offers many challenges for healthcare professionals. Our country has a weak regulatory system in checking healthcare institutions. At least two-thirds of healthcare expenditure is on outpatient care, and lifestyle diseases are being seen as a new area in the field of medicine. Less awareness of Medical Insurance has resulted in people paying from their pockets for medical treatment. Therefore, a very different and dynamic effort is required to get into the domiciliary healthcare segment.

It is observed that in the recent past Hospitals had very little familiarity with marketing research. That has changed dramatically in recent years. Today hospitals are increasingly adopting marketing strategies and research to help them understand opportunities and

problems. Hospitals need to pay more attention and invest more in market research activities. Today health care executives are under tremendous pressure and have to put in a lot of effort

It is observed that in the recent past Hospitals had very little familiarity with marketing research. That has changed dramatically in recent years. Today hospitals are increasingly adopting marketing strategies and research to help them understand opportunities and problems. Hospitals need to pay more attention and invest more in market research activities. Today health care executives are under tremendous pressure and have to put in a lot of effort to increase revenues, reduce costs and develop partnerships with other providers.

It shows as a result that, nearly all health care organizations have developed strategic plans to create strategies for coping with the ever-changing nature of the industry. As part of the core planning process, health care organizations have resorted to marketing research as a means to achieve these goals. Marketing research is basically the objective and systematic method of gathering, analyzing, and interpreting data which caters to a specific situation or problem facing the Healthcare organization.

It is proved that Research is the cornerstone of good marketing planning. Like other different types of business, hospitals have existing services, new service ideas, and patients who affect business. It has been observed that, the hospital's customer has a choice and knows his or her importance. Knowing the needs, wants, and decisionmaking processes of potential customers is extremely important for the success of a Hospital.

The objectives of this study are based on the five generic parameters of SERVQUAL.

1. To study the patient satisfaction of Public and Private Hospitals for all five parameters.
2. To study the patient satisfaction between all five parameters and five different cities.
3. To study the patient satisfaction of all five parameters with demographic factors.
4. To study the patient satisfaction of all five parameters and frequency of visits to the Hospital.

This study was limited to select public and private hospitals in Selected Districts of Uttarakhand

Chapter-2

Literature Review

The review of the literature reveals many studies that have shown a positive relationship between satisfactions and measures of buying intention and between service quality perceptions and satisfaction. Researchers have identified several possible variables that may result in patient's satisfaction with the doctor's services. Some studies state that it is necessary to capture information on patient's needs, expectations and perceptions. Main concerns of patients relate to being treated with dignity and respect, given clear information and psychological support. Older patients tend to be more satisfied with medical care services than their younger counterparts.

According to researchers Fred David, Garner C.Alkin (2006),variables like perceived physician's competence, care and concern towards patients, cost of treatment and communication between physician and patientare of utmost importance.Many studies reveal that a lower priority is placed on patient's perception on patient's run clinical expectations of service quality.

Results also revealed that the customer satisfaction dimensions are: satisfaction with food, satisfaction with the nursing staff and satisfaction with the tariff. All effect positively on both loyalty and satisfaction. Resultsalsoshow that the pattern of relationships between service quality and patient satisfaction was similar across the gender, age and service type subgroups.

It is understood that Organizations are striving hard to redesign and reinvent their operational methodologies by building strong and effective organization culture so as to have a focus on the consumer loyalty and relationship management. Hospitals are facing competitive situations due to globalization and the open-door policy for the Health care market. The economic growth and changed appreciation toward health have continuously increased particular wants and needs of the general public. Hence, large-sized hospitals are striving hard

to expand medical facility investment, top quality human resources and additional services in order to develop competitive power.

Chapter-3

Methodology for the Work Plan

Methodology

Research Design:

The research design is a plan, structure and strategy to answer a problem. In this study, Health care services are the independent variable and patient satisfaction is the dependent variable.

Data Collection:

In this study, data collection will be done in two stages. In the first stage a pilot survey will be done to ascertain the research parameters and to test the validity and the reliability of the instrument used in the study.

In the second stage the primary data will be collected through using the instruments in the study. The instrument used was a self- administered questionnaire. The Secondary data will be collected by scanning literature, professional magazines, research papers and various research report.

Sample Size and Design:

The study will be conducted at Selected Districts of Uttarakhand in 30 Public and 150 Private Hospitals. A total of 400 patients shall participate in the survey using a self administered questionnaire. The patients and their relatives shall be assured that their responses will be kept confidential.

Chapter-4
Data Analysis and Interpretation

The researcher feels that there is tremendous scope to improve the OPD services of Public and Private Hospitals as there is hardly any research done in this area. Patient satisfaction is of utmost importance in today's very competitive enviornment when patients most of the times, themselves take decisions to select a hospital. In order to understand various factors affecting patient satisfaction, studies have been conducted to explore many service quality areas which patients consider while evaluating the quality aspects of hospitals such as latest equipment, physical facilities, ease of supplementary services, nature and response of doctors and medical staff. The word quality is often thought of in different ways by people, as per the situation. The actual meaning of quality is related to excellence: a mark of top most standards and high achievement.

(1) **Tangibles:** Physical facilities, equipment and appearance of personnel.

(2) **Reliability:** Ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately.

(3) **Responsiveness:** Willingness to help customers and provide prompt service.

(4) **Assurance:** (including competence, courtesy, credibility and security). Knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to inspire trust and confidence.

(5) **Empathy:** (including access, communication, understanding the customer). Caring and individualized attention that the firm provides to its customers.

Statement of Hypothesis:

Based on the above objectives, the following hypothesis wereformulated for the proposed research.

H01: There is no significant difference of all the five parameters in public and private hospitals.

H11: There is significant difference of all the five parameters in public and private hospitals.

H02: There is no significant difference in satisfaction of all five parameters in five different cities.

H12 There is significant difference in satisfaction of all five parameters in five different cities.

H03: There is no significant difference in satisfaction of male and female patients for all five parameters.

H13: There is significant difference in satisfaction of male and female patients for all five parameters

H04: There is no significant difference in satisfaction of patients of different age groups for all five parameters

H14: There is significant difference in satisfaction of patients of different age groups for all five parameters

H05:There is no significant difference in satisfaction of patients of different income groups for all five parameters.

H15: There is significant difference in satisfaction of patients of different income groups for all five parameters.

H06: There is no significant difference in satisfaction of patient‟s frequency of visit for all five parameters

H16: There is significant difference in satisfaction of patient‟s frequency of visit for all five parameters.

H07: There is no association between type of hospital and monthly income of patients.

H17: There is association between type of hospital and monthly income of patients.

H08: There is no correlation between five parameters of study.

H18: There is correlation between five parameters of study

Chapter-5

Findings, Suggestions and Conclusions

SERVQUAL is used to measure the quality of services provided by an organization, from a customer's perspective in the service industry.Parasuraman et al., (1988) has initiateda lot of discussions and debates on medical services quality from the perspective of patients. Hesuggested measuring the quality of services provided to customers through recognized performance by users and of expectations based upon the five dimensions of service quality i.e.tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy.The findings from this study are based on SERVQUAL model developed by Parsuraman et al.

The research will be done to achieve the approved objectives of for the research title which will benefit the society as well as hospital in future

Chapter-6

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